

APPROVED: Meeting No. 35-83

ATTEST:

MAYOR AND COUNCIL
ROCKVILLE, MARYLAND
MEETING NO. 32-83

September 19, 1983

The Mayor and Council of Rockville, Maryland, convened in work session in the Council Chamber of Rockville City Hall, Maryland at Vinson Street, on Monday, September 19, 1983, at 8:00 p.m.

PRESENT

Mayor John R. Freeland

Councilman Steve Abrams

Councilman Douglas Duncan

Councilwoman Viola Hovsepian

Councilman John Tyner

The Mayor in the Chair.

In attendance: City Manager Larry Blick; City Clerk Helen Heneghan; City Attorney Paul Glasgow.

Re: Work Session with
Human Rights
Commission

Present for the work session with Chairman JoAnn Mazzetta, are members Edith Kropp, Judy Yudkin, Lloyd Welter, Robert Dorsey, and Jim Coyle.

Mayor Freeland opened this session by congratulating the Commission on its positive approach and positive attitude to the community in the area of Human Rights. The Commission reported on its accomplishments in the past year, such as the Tenants Handbook for the Rockville Housing Authority, meetings with tenant aids and members of the RHA to discuss where communication problems occur and suggest possible solutions, meetings with representatives of the Lincoln Park Tenant Association to outline problem areas in their community, contract with Suburban Maryland Fair Housing to conduct three tests of multiple family housing units within the City to determine if any civil rights violations exist. They have also completed and sent to the City the results of a series of forums held in 1982 which included a forum on housing. They have conducted surveys on fair employment practices in the City. They have an outreach program which includes the Martin Luther King Birthday activities at the Rockville Senior Center. The Commission presented a draft program plan to the Mayor and Council which includes:

A. Employment

1. Continue survey of employment practices among selected employment centers to identify and reduce discrimination
2. Promote and monitor the employment of minority contractors and residents in the Town Center project.
3. Encourage the expanded recruitment and hiring of minorities in the City of Rockville government.
4. Conduct, as appropriate, studies of emerging employment problems facing our growing ethnic minorities (Spanish, Asian, etc.).

B. Housing

1. Continue to work with the Rockville Housing Authority on a variety of unresolved issues:
 - a. Strengthen the Rockville Housing Authority Tenants Association.
 - b. Management/Tenant Relations
 - c. Grievance procedure implementation
 - d. Rockville Housing Authority-Human Rights Commission relations.
2. Continue to work with Rockville Housing Policy Task Force on such issues as:
 - a. Summit Apartments
 - b. Availability of low and moderate income housing
3. Conduct project with the Suburban Maryland Fair Housing Agency to identify discrimination in housing in Rockville.
4. Respond to individual and group complaints about housing discrimination, as needed, during the course of the year.

C. Community Education/Outreach

1. Develop and implement a pro active public management campaign about human rights issues (films, handouts, booklets, etc.)
2. Strengthen HRC liaison activities with other public and private groups, concerned with human rights.
3. Conduct community festival in honor of Martin Luther King's Birthday
4. Monitor incidences of hate/violence and take counter measures as needed
5. Co-sponsor and facilitate the 1984 Annual Women's Fair of Montgomery County.
6. Develop information packets from various ethnic groups in the City of Rockville to promote greater understanding.
7. Initiate an effort to serve as a speakers bureau to community organizations (public/private) on human rights.
8. Investigate the needs of special populations, i.e., handicapped, elderly, women, youths and deinstitutionalized persons.
9. Continue to work with the Rockville City Council and the Montgomery County School Board on special education issues, i.e., racial balance, children of refugees and illegal aliens, etc.

D. Structure and Functioning of Human Rights Commission

1. Continue to oversee the conduct of discrimination complaint activities of staff to the Commission.

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2. Review the need of more Commission involvement in, and the use of, legal activities in complaint resolutions.
3. Develop orientation program and materials for new members.
4. Assist the Mayor and Council in the identification and orientation of potential new Commission members.
5. Expand the Human Rights Commission efforts to communicate better with the Mayor and Council.
6. Investigate ways that the Commission can be made more aware of the dynamics of the community environment which impacts on the commission activities.

Councilman Duncan noted that Twinbrook and Beall Elementary Schools are tops in minority numbers. It was his hope that the Commission is working on this with the Education Commission to meet any special needs. Councilman Tyner suggested information packets for ethnic groups. Mrs. Mazzetta explained a large problem at this time is the language barrier but the Commission hopes to alleviate that now that multi-lingual people are on the Commission. Councilman Abrams said he shared the Mayor's feeling about the positive approach and he sees that the Commission has found ways to create a better dialogue and mechanisms for discussing issues. It is well to always be looking for ways to overcome barriers for cooperation rather than a confrontive approach. Councilwoman Hovsepian suggested that the Mayor and Council be kept up to date by frequent presentations. She suggested that the Commission work with employers to encourage them to train individuals and she also suggested that the Commission monitor the relocation program at the Summit Apartments, particularly for minorities. Councilman Abrams noted that \$150,000 will soon be in a City fund. The Commission should look for ways to use this for affordable housing. Mr. Dorsey, referring to the fund, asked if there would be a way this fund could be replenished if monies were used to combat vandalism resulting in a savings in the cost of correcting or cleaning up after a crime. Mrs. Mazzetta said that the Commission is making an effort to deal with evictions that are caused because of house keeping problems. They have not yet heard back from the apartments where this was happening. Councilman Abrams suggested that the Commission let the Public Information Officer know what it is doing so that there could be some better communication. Mayor Freeland encouraged the Commission because he said the Commission has a sensitivity for what should be looked at. His only guidance is to let the Mayor and Council look at ideas ahead of time so that there will not be any surprises. Mr. Welter said it is necessary to become involved before serious discrimination issues arise. The Mayor and Council should continue to encourage the use of Rockville people in minorities in the Town Center. Mr. Dorsey said the Commission will be pleased to draft recommendations for the Mayor and Council but he would like to come up with

information to pool file projects, but he would like the Mayor and Council to have a list of criteria that they should satisfy. Mayor Freeland said what the Commission feels should be addressed should come forward and there should be no criteria put down. A discussion followed on the necessity of an information exchange between the various Boards and Commissions. It was agreed that Commission minutes would be kept. The City Manager noted that the minutes are sometimes late in coming through from the various boards and it may be that the news is old when it is received. Mayor Freeland asked that books be placed in the Board and Commission room so that minutes could be placed in the books with agendas and in that way commissions could share their information. Judy Yudkin noted that she herself is quite pleased with the handbook project and thanked the Mayor and Council. The Mayor said he is pleased that things have gone well. He asked Mr. Drayton for his thoughts. Mr. Drayton agreed and said the Commission has established excellent goals and is working hard to implement them.

The Mayor and Council thanked the Commission for their time.

Re: Work Session on
Charter Review

Mr. Alex Greene and Mr. Paul McGuckian joined the Mayor and Council for this work session. Mr. Greene briefed the Council on the background of the Charter Review Commission that worked in 1972 and 1973. His main advice to the Council was the Charter seems to be working well and he sees no necessity for making any changes. Mr. McGuckian concurred in these statements. Mayor Freeland asked their feelings on the change of election time. Mr. Greene said the Charter Review Commission had recommended this but when it was placed on the ballot the public did not like the idea. Councilwoman Hovsepien asked their feelings on a referendum for any Charter amendment. Mr. Greene said he felt this should be necessary only if a change were made in the structure of government. Councilwoman Hovsepien questioned the necessity of 20% of the voters signing a petition in order to bring a Charter Amendment to referendum. She suggested that this be reduced to 5%. Mr. Glasgow said that is a State law. Mayor Freeland said he felt more would be gained by leaving it alone and then there would be no frivolous amendments. Councilwoman Hovsepien asked if Mr. McGuckian and Greene had had a chance to review a proposed Charter amendment that a person must resign from office if they decide to pursue another office. Mr. McGuckian said he saw no reason for such a rule. Mr. Greene said it would seem to him like a conscience issue since you cannot legislate away a person's rights. The Council then discussed at length the area of elections and whether employees of the City should be allowed to run for any elected office. It was the consensus of the

Council that the City Attorney should draft a Charter Amendment for Council review which would allow employees to run for office provided there would be no conflict with the City's function. Councilwoman Hovsepian suggested a public hearing be held on all of the suggestions. Councilman Duncan asked the stipend be deleted in the Charter and placed in an ordinance where it was more appropriate. Councilwoman Hovsepian disagreed. The Council agreed that it might be a good idea to look at the process of filling vacancies. The City Attorney was instructed to draft Charter Amendments to be placed in the Mayor and Council's information section. After review the Council could then proceed if it wished

Re: Approval of Testimony
for public hearing on
Rockville Facility/
Intercounty Connector

Mr. Davis, the Director of Planning, presented several alternative testimonies to the Council and outlined the route that will be taken and the plans with each. Councilman Hanna of Montgomery County addressed the Council and stressed the importance of building a connector and said if the opportunity is not taken now there may not be another. After long discussion, the Council agreed that the testimony would speak to Alternative A which is not to build along the present alignment but to complete all roads currently programmed in the County. The Mayor and Council will stress its strong support for an east west route in the north and support a cross county connector with roads to key northeastern points. It is the feeling of the Council there should be a more direct route between upper and center Montgomery County and Baltimore/Washington International Airport and the Port of Baltimore. Mayor Freeland will deliver the testimony.

Re: Executive Session

On motion of Councilman Abrams, duly seconded and unanimously passed, the meeting was closed for executive session to discuss litigation.

Re: Adjournment

There being no further business to come before the Council in executive session the meeting was adjourned at midnight to convene again in general session on Monday, September 26, 1983, at 8:00 p.m. or at the call of the Mayor.